of Costiveness.

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Costiveness

Costiveness is a relative term. Some habits require two and three stools a day, while others enjoy good health with but one or two stools in a week. This is the case with some old people. Dr Cleghorn says it is remarkably so in the Island of Minorca. An aged and intelligent citizen of Philadelphia informed me that he had seen a man in the state of New Jersey who had had but three stools in a year and nine months. He had been in the habit of pushing up his aliment after it had imparted its nutritious qualities to the stomach. Sailors often pass days and weeks without a stool. A Sea Captain

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had no evacuation from his bowels during a Voyage of between 30 and 40 days to Lis=
=bon, and I have heard of a Sailor who during a Voyage of eight weeks had no stool. In all these Cases the feces are supposed to be Absorbed by the ~~lactals~~ lymphatics and conveyed out of the System by other emunctories particularly by the pores. This is made probable by the analogy of pus being conveyed out of the System ~~in a similar~~ that thro' the same, or some other Channel, by the fecal Odor which is perceived in the persons who thus retain their feces, and by no pain ~~or~~ or swelling being perceived in the bowels, and by no more than the usual & natural Quanti=
=ty of feces being discharged ~~from~~ by the Operation of a purge after this

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protracted Costiveness.

Notwithstanding these deviations in the Economy of the bowels, most of people require a stool every day in order to enjoy good health. ~~The~~ morning is the time in which ~~they~~ an inclination to stool is usually felt, and not more ~~to~~ from habit than necessity founded upon the Office I formerly ascribed to the bile. It may be considered in every body as a purge taken overnight.

The absence of this evacuation ~~every~~ one every day is attended in most people with uneasiness. If it occurs more than one or two days it is often followed with ~~pain~~, head ache, ~~and fever~~. ~~The~~ Costiveness is a remote cause of those ~~morbid~~ sensations. It originates in a stricture state of the

~~muscular fibers of the bowels~~ from the pressure of the distended bowels upon the descending aorta, and with pain in the sides from the pressure of the bowels upon the liver and spleen. When the feces stagnate long in the Rectum, they produce colic hæmorrhoids, fistula in Ano, and sometimes a suppression of Urine. But these are not all the hurtful effects of Costiveness. By its long confinement, the feces become so indurated, as to require such powerful efforts or straining to discharge them, by which means ruptures vertigo, headach apoplexy, and consumption have been induced, several cases of which have come within my knowledge. From these facts it is obvious that this disease is not without danger, and that great pains should be taken to cure it.

V 3 Certain Obstructing matters in the Rectum, such as hardned faces, a fish bone, Condylomata, and tow. I have known Costiveness to be induced by each of those causes. The tow induced it in a child. It was thrust down its throat to silence it when it cried.

4 Worms.

The causes are direct and indirect

I The direct are

1 Certain Aliments & Drinks particularly Cheese and the red Wines. —

2 A sudden change from a full to a low diet, and vice versa. The prisoners in our jail always become costive for several weeks after their confinement from being fed upon simple aliment. V

II The indirect Causes of Costiveness are

1 A sedentary life. Studious men, and such mechanics as sit at their employments are generally costive.

2 Toiling.

3 Drugs that promote undue perspiration.

4 Riding on horseback.

~~5 Certain obstructing matters in the Rectum, such as hardened feces, a fish bone, tow and candy-worms. I have known costiveness to be induced by each of these causes.~~

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~~Worms.~~

5 Intense Application to Study or business, which by rendering the System insensible to the stimulus of the faces upon the Rectum, favours their accumulation, and stagnation in the bowels. Students often become costive from this cause.

6 An exposed situation of privies. This operates chiefly upon Women. I have heard of the death of a young lady in South Carolina who lodged in a house in which the common sitting room (which was generally occupied by Gentlemen) had a window in a direction with a privy. She died a martyr to her delicacy.

The Remedies for Costiveness should be I Radical & II palliative. The I^st are ~~I Removing all its morbid causes~~.

1st I: Early rising, and exposing the body to the cool air by which means the perspiration is thrown upon the bowels.

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2 Visiting a privy every morning at a certain hour. Mr Locke's directions under this head are worthy of attention. The patient should sit for half an hour to an hour ~~upon the~~ in the privy, during which time he should make occasional efforts to discharge the contents of his bowels. These efforts are need ~~the better~~ best when they are not of a violent nature. Thus gentle purges sometimes operate, when drastic purges have no effect.

3 By using a close stool in a warm room in cold weather. The sedative action of the cold air of a privy acting upon the Rectum ~~of the~~ ~~checks checks~~ counteracts the ~~efforts~~ action of the abdominal muscles upon it, and thus prevents a stool.

4 A laxative diet consisting of Indian ~~meal~~ corn bread, or of a bread made of

v more liquid the diet, the less apt it is to induce costiveness.

11 6 where there is reason to believe costive=ness arises from a languor in the liver in secreting, and effusing bile into the bowels, rubbing the right side with a dry hand every morning & evening has been found useful. With this remedy should be joined small doses of Calomel continued long enó to affect the mouth. Should the liver not be in fault, the calomel would be useful in exciting the muscular fibres and mucous glands of the bowels, and thereby overcoming ~~one of~~ the causes of ~~this~~ ~~obstrucbiness or~~ costiveness.

7 ~~S~~ ~~bolat~~ Friction with a dry hand,

equal parts of wheat and Indian Corn flour, of summer fruits, and roasted apples. The

5 Certain medicines that remove the torpor of the bowels upon which Costiveness depends. These are Beech, Iron, garlic, onions, mustard and horseradish.

II I have thus enumerated the radical remedies for this disease. I shall now

II: ly mention such palliative remedies as are calculated to ~~obviate costiveness~~ open the bowels, & thus to obviate the hurtful effects of Costiveness. They are

1 Sulphur, Cream tartar, magnesia, prune-ins ~~and~~ lenitive electuary & Rhubarb. The last has an advantage over them All in being not only a palliative, but a radical remedy for Costiveness, for while it purges it ~~purges~~ gives tone to the bowels, & hence unlike most other medicines, the longer it is taken, the less quantity of it operates.

= or with stimulanting substances to the belly.

& what would be the effect of stimulants to the spine? I mentioned formerly that the bowels and other viscera are liable to spinal paralysis as well as the limbs. It is possible the cause of the torpid state of the bowels in costiveness may originate in disorder in the medulla spinalis.

It may taken in the root by chewing, in pills, in a Vinous, or Spiritous tincture, or in a Syrup or a Watery infusion. It is the basis of Warners gout purge, which may be taken instead of any of the above preparations of it. Aloes, and the Butter Nut pill should never be taken to obviate habitual costiveness. The one former disposes to the piles, - the latter to diseases of the brain by its narcotic quality. I object also to salts, Castor oil, senna, and all the Greek pills of the shops as habitual laxative medicines. They irritate a greater range of the bowels, than is necessary barely to open them, and thus bring adjoining healthy parts into sympathy with them. They moreover leave the bowels in a debilitated state, & thus predispose to a continuance of the disease.

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2 ~~The~~ Glysters. Simple water is sufficient in those cases in which the faces require to be dissolved or softned, in order to be discharged. In cases where there is great torpor in the bowels ~~the~~ a little salt may be added to them or ~~than or~~ the quantity of water should ~~be so great as to imi~~ so much encreased as to imitate ~~the~~ bowels ~~into the~~ by the stimulus of distention. ~~to~~ ~~little salt may be added to them and~~ ~~which~~ ~~purges~~ The french wisely prefer removing costiveness by means of ~~Glysters~~ this remedy rather than by ~~in preference to~~ purges which by acting upon the whole intestinal canal frequently derange the offices of the stomach and liver. Glysters act upon a small portion of them only, and ~~may~~ thus produce no commotions in the whole intestinal system.

3 ~~The~~ Suppositories are still less offensive to the bowels than either purges or glysters. They may be made of ~~wax~~ Allum, ~~or~~ Soap or Wax according to the degree of stimulus the Rectum

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may require.

4 ~~By~~ Touching the Anus frequently with Sweet Oil Dr Bonet says has often ~~relaxed the~~ opened the ~~bowels~~ bowels. The same Author advises to applying Sweet Oil, or any other soft and emollient Substance to the Soles of the feet for the same purpose. They relax the bowels by the Sympathy that subsists between them, and the soles of the feet.

5th Standing with the bare feet upon a cold marble flab, or putting the feet in cold Water for a few minutes has sometimes imparted Action to the bowels, and thus gently opened them. This remedy like the last acts by the Sympathy which subsists between the feet and the bowels. The existence of this Sympathy is evident from cold feet so often inducing the

Colic.

~~C~~ all the remote causes of the disease should be removed. If it arise from fæces so indurated, that they cannot be ~~dissolved~~ removed by purges, nor dissolved by glysters, they should be extracted ~~by~~ means of a Scoop, ~~or with the fingers~~ - if from any substance accidentally swallowed, and sticking in the rectum, it should be extracted with the fingers, - if - from Condylomata which act by narrowing the passage thro' the anus, - they should be ~~destroy~~ removed by means of ligatures, - if from worms, - worm medicines should be employed to dislodge them.

We may always know the bowels to be in natural and healthy state by the following marks. 1 Stool a day, and that in the morn=ing.

2 no wind preceding it.

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9 3 The stool neither liquid, nor very solid, of a bilious color, and fecal odor. "bene ~~olens~~ coloratata, bene olerata".

4 Not cut into fragments. It shows irri=tation upon some one of the bowels.

There is a ~~troublesome~~ disease connected with Costiveness that is Flatulency or to use a common expression a constant inc=clination "to break wind" upon which I shall make a few remarks. It is often so troublesome as to compel persons to leave company, and sometimes to prevent their going into it. It attends Costiveness, but I have met with it in regular bowels. It occurs chiefly in gouty & hypochondriacal habits.

The Remedies for it are solid diet, well

cooked, toasted bread, ginger tea, horse-radish, mustard, the tincture of Asafoetida & the oil of amber, and the remedies formerly mentioned to remove costiveness if it be accompanied with that state of the bowels.